

Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 9, Jonah, Part 2 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Wilson, Prophets, Session 9, Jonah, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Marv Wilson's "Prophets, Session 9, Jonah, Part 2" offers an exegetical, theological, historical, and geographical exploration of the Book of Jonah. The lecture examines Jonah's character, noting his struggles with obedience and his flawed nature, emphasizing that God can use imperfect individuals. **Wilson breaks down the chapters of Jonah**, identifying him as the fleeing, praying, obedient, and sulking prophet, also addressing the use of hendiadys. **The presentation also addresses the wickedness of Nineveh** and considers whether Jonah could have survived in the belly of a "great fish." Finally, **the lecture analyzes the sailors' fear and conversion** by mentioning that they made sacrifices to the Lord after Jonah was thrown from the boat.

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Wilson, Prophets, Session 9 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Prophetic Literature).**



**Wilson_Prophets_S
ession09.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Wilson, Prophets, Session 9, Jonah, Part 2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Wilson_Prophets_EN_Session09.pdf," which is a lecture by Dr. Marv Wilson on the book of Jonah:

Briefing Document: Dr. Marv Wilson on Jonah, Part 2

Introduction

This document summarizes the key points of Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture on the book of Jonah, specifically focusing on themes of obedience, divine providence, and the nature of prophecy within the Old Testament. Dr. Wilson approaches the text from multiple angles including exegetical, theological, historical and geographical. He emphasizes that the book of Jonah is not just a fish story but a powerful message about God's character and his concern for all people, not just Israel.

Main Themes and Ideas

1. Human Imperfection and Divine Use:

- Dr. Wilson emphasizes that God uses flawed individuals. Jonah, despite his struggles with obedience and his personal biases, is still used by God.
- He draws parallels with other biblical figures like Moses, David, and even some of the women in Jesus' lineage who were of questionable character to illustrate this point: "That's not to excuse our disobedience, but it is to point out you don't have to be perfect all the time for God to use you."
- This highlights the grace of God and how He can work through imperfect people.

1. Jonah's Journey as a Reflection of Human Struggle:

- Dr. Wilson structures the book of Jonah according to the character of the prophet in each chapter:
- Chapter 1: "the fleeing prophet"
- Chapter 2: "the praying prophet"
- Chapter 3: "the obedient prophet"
- Chapter 4: "the sulking prophet"

- This progression reveals Jonah's internal struggle between his own will and God's will, a struggle common to all humans.

1. **The Nature of Prophecy and Divine Communication:**

- Dr. Wilson discusses the phrase "the word of the Lord came to Jonah," which is a common expression in the prophetic books of the Old Testament.
- He contrasts this with other prophetic experiences such as the dramatic vision of Ezekiel to show that divine communication can come in both powerful and quiet ways: "there was that certainty somehow, whether it was big and dramatic or simply quiet certitude inside of the prophet that he was speaking the word of God."
- The core idea of a prophet is being a "spokesperson for God".
- He also introduces the concept of *Kerygma* (proclamation) tying the New Testament concept of heralding the Gospel with the Old Testament concept of prophets proclaiming God's message.
- He points out that the message is more important than the literary form.

1. **Hendiadys:**

- Dr. Wilson introduces the literary concept of hendiadys, "an expression of one idea using two words typically connected with and" which is a Semitic literary style found frequently in the Bible, specifically citing "arise, go to Nineveh" from the beginning of the book of Jonah as an example.

1. **International Morality and Justice:**

- Dr. Wilson emphasizes that the prophets highlight the fact that God cares about morality and ethics in all nations, not just Israel. "there is such a thing as international morality that the Bible upholds."
- He points to God's judgment of Nineveh's wickedness, and how such issues are also a central part of the messages of other prophets like Amos.
- He links this theme with present-day notions of human rights and social justice, arguing these are fundamentally biblical concepts. "Social justice is not something invented by Christianity," but is rooted in the Torah, and is not "novel".

- The New Testament is not novel because every idea in it can be "validated, established, [and] find that antecedent already in the law of the prophets and the writings."

1. **Historical and Geographical Context:**

- Dr. Wilson provides historical context regarding Nineveh, mentioning that it became the capital of the Assyrian empire under Sennacherib by 700 BC. The fall of Nineveh to evil is described in the book of Nahum.
- He explains the Phoenician connection to Tarshish, suggesting it was either a city in Spain (Tartessus) or a term referring to the open sea, highlighting Phoenician maritime dominance.
- He also notes the cultural influence of the Phoenicians in the ancient world, including their invention of the alphabet.
- Dr. Wilson also emphasizes the importance of the Phoenicians to maritime navigation in the ancient world, relating the practice of monkeys being placed on board ships as "radar", climbing the masts to scout for land.
- These points help in understanding the context in which the events of Jonah took place.

1. **Divine Providence:**

- Dr. Wilson emphasizes God's sovereignty and control over nature, illustrating this through multiple examples from the Book of Jonah. For example, he attributes the storm, the great fish, the vine, the worm, and the east wind to divine action and not mere chance occurrences: "God sovereignly controls the natural order."
- He contrasts this biblical view with the nature worship of the Canaanites, which equated God with nature. "the Bible does not support pantheism, nature, and God is one."
- He says, "everything is theological" in the Old Testament world view, and explains, that God has "His finger in the pie of every dimension of life."
- He cites Heschel when he states that God guides and directs history until the time of peace and justice on earth. He notes that though God permits human freedom, not everything that happens on Earth is God's will. Man can enhance or retard the will of God.

- He uses the name of the city of Providence, Rhode Island as an example of belief in divine providence, where "God is controlling".

1. **Theological Implications**

- He explains the concept of "quid pro quo" in ancient world religion, contrasting it with Christianity where people "serve him out of pure love" and "love him because he first loved us."
- He notes that the sailors in chapter one, who were polytheistic, thought that the storm was caused by an angry deity, and they initially thought Jonah was guilty.
- The casting of lots to discover the culprit was a common practice throughout the ancient Near East.
- He notes that Jonah makes three confessions of faith throughout the book. 1) In chapter 1 he proclaims belief in the creator God. 2) In chapter 2 he says salvation comes from the Lord. 3) In chapter 4, he recognizes that God is merciful.
- The name Jesus comes from the word Yeshua, which means deliverance or salvation, and is a word in Jonah's confession of faith.
- He notes that theology is not static, but is living, dynamic, and subjective. He points out that the earliest theology in the New Testament was existential, and personal.

1. **The "Great Fish" Story:**

- Dr. Wilson acknowledges the sensational aspect of the "great fish" and stresses that the focus should be on God and not the fish, calling it a "dog gadol", a large fish, and that the text is not necessarily talking about a whale.
- He shares the story of James Bartley, found in the Princeton Theological Review from 1927 to illustrate the possibility of a man surviving being swallowed by a large sea creature.

Key Quotes

- "That's not to excuse our disobedience, but it is to point out you don't have to be perfect all the time for God to use you."
- "there was that certainty somehow, whether it was big and dramatic or simply quiet certitude inside of the prophet that he was speaking the word of God."
- "there is such a thing as international morality that the Bible upholds."
- "Social justice is not something invented by Christianity"
- "God sovereignly controls the natural order."
- "the Bible does not support pantheism, nature, and God is one."

Conclusion Dr. Wilson's lecture offers a rich and nuanced understanding of the book of Jonah, moving beyond a simple narrative to explore profound theological and historical concepts. His discussion underscores the importance of recognizing God's sovereignty, His use of flawed individuals, His concern for all nations, and the dynamic nature of faith. The lecture stresses the important role of understanding the cultural context in which the Bible was written as well as the role of Old Testament teachings for New Testament theology.

4. Study Guide: Wilson, Prophets, Session 9, Jonah, Part 2

Jonah: Part 2 Study Guide

Quiz

1. What is hendiadys, and where does it appear in the first verses of Jonah?
Hendiadys is a literary device where one idea is expressed using two words, typically connected by "and." It appears in Jonah 1:2 with the phrase "Arise, go to Nineveh," which could be condensed to just "Go to Nineveh."
2. According to the lecture, how can the expression "word of the Lord" be interpreted? The "word of the Lord" can be interpreted both as the Scripture itself and as the specific revelation that God is giving to the prophet. It signifies the divine source of the prophet's message and highlights that they are God's spokesperson.
3. What is Kerygma, and what is its significance in both the New and Old Testaments? Kerygma is the proclamation or preaching of a message. In the New Testament, it is associated with the core of the Gospel (Christ's death, burial, and resurrection). In the Old Testament, as seen with Jonah, it demonstrates that the concept of proclamation was already present.
4. What does the word "rasha" signify in the context of the book of Jonah? "Rasha" means to be ethically loose, wicked, and untied from moral standards. In the case of Nineveh, this is a general term for immorality, though other prophets describe more specific forms of depravity.
5. How was the idea of impalement used by the Assyrians and how does that relate to crucifixion? The Assyrians used impalement as a form of punishment and intimidation, displaying the bodies of their enemies on stakes outside city walls. This practice is where the Romans are believed to have drawn their inspiration for crucifixion.
6. What are two possible interpretations for the word "Tarshish" in the book of Jonah? "Tarshish" could refer to the city of Tartessus in southwest Spain, a Phoenician mining colony, OR it could be a reference to the open sea, as large trading vessels of that time were often called ships of Tarshish.
7. Explain the concept of Divine Providence as described in the lecture. Divine Providence is the concept that God guides and directs history and nations in a linear and progressive way. He is actively involved in the affairs of the world, but

does not manipulate free will, instead providing opportunities for both advancement and retardation of His will.

8. According to the lecture, what is the relationship between God and nature in the Bible? The Bible does not equate God with nature, as seen in many other ancient religions. Rather, God is understood to be above and in control of nature. The Bible makes a distinction between the creator and the creature, opposing pantheism.
9. Describe the significance of casting lots in the Old and New Testaments, according to the lecture. Casting lots was a method of seeking guidance from God by drawing marked sticks or pebbles, and it was practiced throughout the ancient Near East. The Bible suggests God directed how the lots fell. It appears both in the Old Testament (for dividing land) and in the New Testament (to replace Judas as one of the twelve apostles).
10. What are the three confessions of faith Jonah makes throughout the book? Jonah confesses: (1) that he worships the Lord God of heaven who created the sea and dry land (1:9); (2) that salvation comes from the Lord (2:9); and (3) that God is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love (4:2). These confessions demonstrate how his understanding of God evolves through his experiences.

Answer Key

1. Hendiadys is a literary device where one idea is expressed using two words, typically connected by "and." It appears in Jonah 1:2 with the phrase "Arise, go to Nineveh," which could be condensed to just "Go to Nineveh."
2. The "word of the Lord" can be interpreted both as the Scripture itself and as the specific revelation that God is giving to the prophet. It signifies the divine source of the prophet's message and highlights that they are God's spokesperson.
3. Kerygma is the proclamation or preaching of a message. In the New Testament, it is associated with the core of the Gospel (Christ's death, burial, and resurrection). In the Old Testament, as seen with Jonah, it demonstrates that the concept of proclamation was already present.
4. "Rasha" means to be ethically loose, wicked, and untied from moral standards. In the case of Nineveh, this is a general term for immorality, though other prophets describe more specific forms of depravity.

5. The Assyrians used impalement as a form of punishment and intimidation, displaying the bodies of their enemies on stakes outside city walls. This practice is where the Romans are believed to have drawn their inspiration for crucifixion.
6. "Tarshish" could refer to the city of Tartessus in southwest Spain, a Phoenician mining colony, OR it could be a reference to the open sea, as large trading vessels of that time were often called ships of Tarshish.
7. Divine Providence is the concept that God guides and directs history and nations in a linear and progressive way. He is actively involved in the affairs of the world, but does not manipulate free will, instead providing opportunities for both advancement and retardation of His will.
8. The Bible does not equate God with nature, as seen in many other ancient religions. Rather, God is understood to be above and in control of nature. The Bible makes a distinction between the creator and the creature, opposing pantheism.
9. Casting lots was a method of seeking guidance from God by drawing marked sticks or pebbles, and it was practiced throughout the ancient Near East. The Bible suggests God directed how the lots fell. It appears both in the Old Testament (for dividing land) and in the New Testament (to replace Judas as one of the twelve apostles).
10. Jonah confesses: (1) that he worships the Lord God of heaven who created the sea and dry land (1:9); (2) that salvation comes from the Lord (2:9); and (3) that God is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love (4:2). These confessions demonstrate how his understanding of God evolves through his experiences.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the concept of God's sovereignty as presented in the book of Jonah, using examples from the text and the lecture to illustrate how God's control over nature and events shapes the narrative. How does this portrayal of divine sovereignty compare to the idea of human free will?
2. Analyze Jonah's character development throughout the book, focusing on his disobedience, repentance, and subsequent anger. How do these changes highlight the human struggle with obedience and the complexities of faith?
3. Explore the theme of international morality in the book of Jonah and its implications for understanding God's concerns for all nations. How does the book's message challenge the idea of God's exclusive concern for Israel?
4. Examine the role of ritual versus genuine faith in the book of Jonah, drawing on the sailors' initial reactions to the storm and Micah 6:8 as presented in the lecture. How does the book demonstrate that true faith is not about appeasing God, but about something else?
5. Compare and contrast how the lecture describes both the literary aspects of the book of Jonah and its theological themes. How do literary devices like hendiadys contribute to the meaning of the text? And how are these teachings still relevant for modern readers?

Glossary

- **Hendiadys:** A figure of speech where one idea is expressed using two words typically connected with "and."
- **Kerygma:** A Greek word meaning proclamation or preaching, especially the preaching of the Gospel in the New Testament and any divine message in the Old Testament.
- **Logos:** A Greek word meaning "word," often used in reference to the divine word or reason.
- **Memra:** The Aramaic equivalent for the "word" of God.
- **Davar:** The Hebrew equivalent for the "word" of God.
- **Rasha:** A Hebrew word meaning to be ethically loose, wicked, and untied from moral standards.
- **Tarshish:** Could refer to either a city in southwest Spain (Tartessus), a Phoenician colony known for mining OR the "open sea" and a term for large, trading vessels.
- **Divine Providence:** The belief that God guides and directs history and nations.
- **Pantheism:** The belief that God and nature are one and the same.
- **Quid pro quo:** A Latin phrase meaning "something for something," used to describe the idea that one can appease God through ritual or offerings.
- **Malachiam:** Hebrew for "Salt Sea," the name the Bible gives to the Dead Sea.
- **Ostracize:** A Greek word rooted in the practice of using ostraca (pieces of pottery) for voting, in particular ostracizing someone, or voting to remove someone from a community.
- **Dag gadol:** Hebrew for "great fish," a term used for any large sea creature.
- **Yeshua:** The Hebrew word for deliverance or salvation; the name from which "Jesus" is derived.

5. FAQs on Wilson, Prophets, Session 9, Jonah, Part 2, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on the Book of Jonah

1. **What is unique about the book of Jonah compared to other books of the Minor Prophets?**
 Unlike other Minor Prophets that primarily focus on delivering messages, the book of Jonah gives us a significant amount of detail about the life and personal struggles of the prophet himself. It shows us his internal conflict between obedience and his own desires, and how he wrestles with God's commands, illustrating that even those chosen by God may struggle and be imperfect. This makes Jonah's story more of a narrative biography than just a series of prophetic pronouncements.
3. **How does the structure of Jonah's story reflect his character development?**
 Each chapter in the book can be characterized by a specific aspect of Jonah's behavior. Chapter 1 portrays him as a "fleeing prophet," running from God's command. Chapter 2 shows him as a "praying prophet" from within the fish. Chapter 3 depicts an "obedient prophet" after receiving a second chance. Finally, Chapter 4 shows him as a "sulking" and angry prophet, highlighting his ongoing internal struggles with God's will and his personal biases. This progression shows that obedience isn't always smooth or without personal conflict.
5. **What is the significance of the phrase "the word of the Lord came to Jonah"?**
 The phrase signifies the divine origin and authority of the prophetic message. It highlights that the prophet is acting as a spokesperson for God, conveying a message that has its roots in the divine realm. This phrase, common among the prophets, points to the supernatural nature of their calling and the certainty they possessed that they were communicating God's will, whether through a dramatic experience or a quiet inner conviction. The use of "Davar" (word) indicates the revelatory nature of God's communication to the prophet, implying more than just the spoken word.

6. Why was Jonah so reluctant to go to Nineveh?

7. Jonah was a fierce patriot and could not reconcile the idea of going to the Ninevites, who he saw as enemies. He had a strong nationalistic bias and couldn't accept that God's mercy and plan would extend to those he considered to be the "bad guys." He struggled with submitting his personal feelings and prejudices to God's larger plan. This shows that prophets are also products of their cultures and can be influenced by personal biases which they need to learn to put aside for God's will to be done.

8. What does the book of Jonah reveal about God's relationship with nature and humanity?

9. The book emphasizes God's sovereignty over the natural world, repeatedly showing how He controls natural elements like wind, the sea, a great fish, a vine, a worm, and an east wind. It establishes that God is not part of nature but is its creator and controller. The story also underscores that God's concern and accountability for moral behavior is not just for Israel but also extends to other nations. Moreover, it demonstrates that God gives people free choice and that human actions can either advance or hinder His will.

10. What is the "kerygma" and how does it relate to Jonah's message?

11. The "kerygma" refers to the act of proclamation or preaching, specifically the core message of the Gospel in the New Testament about Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. In Jonah, we see a parallel of the same idea in the Old Testament where God sent Jonah to give a message to Nineveh that resulted in the city repenting. This emphasizes the idea that the act of proclamation is fundamental to God's engagement with humanity, in both the Old and New Testament.

12. What is the significance of the sailors' reactions during the storm?

13. The sailors, initially crying out to their own gods (Baal), acknowledged the true God of Israel, Yahweh, after seeing the storm cease when Jonah was thrown overboard. This indicates a spontaneous recognition and fear of the Lord, along with their offering of sacrifices to Him. It highlights God's ability to manifest His power and supremacy over pagan deities. Furthermore, it illustrates a central message in the Old Testament - that God's power can convince people of His existence and is greater than any man-made deity.

14. What is the main takeaway about the nature of faith and the Christian life from the story of Jonah?

15. The story of Jonah demonstrates that faith is not just about perfect obedience but also about acknowledging that God works in and through our imperfections. Jonah's journey shows us that even those God uses may struggle, doubt, and exhibit personal flaws, and that is okay. The book also serves as a reminder that the Christian life is not a transactional relationship, where we give to get, but is based on a love that flows from our recognition of God's love and grace, as exemplified through the grace shown to the Ninevites despite their sin. Finally, the book is also an example that theology is not static or solely contained in creeds, but a dynamic and evolving understanding of a personal and living God.